



LTG Paul J. Kern and ACMA of the Year Glenn Buttrey



LTG Paul J. Kern and ACM of the Year Christi Steiner

Spotlight On Supervisors . . .

ARMY ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP 2001

Sandra R. Marks

Introduction

The role of the supervisor is critical in the development and success of tomorrow's leaders. To further understand this issue and how supervisors will influence the composition of the future acquisition workforce, more than 150 members of the Army Acquisition and Technology Workforce (A&TWF) convened at the annual Army Acquisition Career Management Workshop in Austin, TX, Jan. 9-12, 2001. Through a series of interactive workshops, attendees

learned how supervisors play a key role in helping employees manage their acquisition careers.

In separate pre-workshop sessions, Acquisition Career Managers (ACMs) and Acquisition Career Management Advocates (ACMAs) addressed new career-development initiatives and pending changes to institute them.

The workshop formally convened with a keynote address by LTG Paul J. Kern, Army Acquisition Corps Director. Kern addressed the importance of supporting the transformation of

the Army and the need to commit to develop future leaders. Noting the anticipated high rate of attrition within the Army A&TWF in the next 5 years, Kern emphasized that career development not be viewed as something just for ourselves but as something we do for all the people we work with, especially younger workforce members. Kern stressed that supervisors and their subordinates achieve Level III certification in their single career field. He also called on managers and supervisors to take cross-functional training and acquire

the skills to stay current through continuous learning.

Kern concluded by recognizing ACMA of the Year Glenn Buttrey and ACM of the Year Christi Steiner. Buttrey is the Director, Business Management/ACMA in the Program Executive Office, Aviation at Redstone Arsenal, AL. Steiner serves at Rock Island, IL.

AAC Update

Following the awards ceremony, COL Frank C. Davis III, Director of the Acquisition Career Management Office (ACMO); Sandy Long, then Acting ACMO Deputy Director; and COL Rob Reyenga, Chief of the Acquisition Management Branch (AMB) at the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command (PERSCOM), engaged in an interactive discourse with the audience to assess recent changes in the Army Acquisition Corps (AAC). Davis began by reviewing issues related to downsizing, missions, readiness, morale, the aging workforce, and training. He noted that despite progress during the past 25 years, much work remains to be done on these same issues. Davis emphasized the need for innovative approaches to deal with these challenges.

Reyenga called on the workforce to help develop long-range plans for acquisition career management. Some recent changes he cited were placement of ACMs in the field, new management personnel, and new education and training opportunities. He added that these changes all support the AAC vision, and we need to ensure we have the right programs and people in place to continue supporting it. In addition to having systems in place to fill current jobs, we need systems to develop future leaders, he concluded.

To assess the conferees' responses to current policies, proce-



**ACMO
Director
COL Frank C. Davis III**

dures, and programs, Long opened the floor for comments and questions. She also stated that some of the ACMO's objectives are to simplify the career development model, refine education and training programs, better inform career managers and define their roles, educate supervisors, and increase understanding of the career development model. She added that the ACMO will use information from the workshop to achieve these objectives, develop new initiatives, and review individual development plans (IDPs) and acquisition career record briefs (ACRBs).

Specialized Workshops

Five select interactive workshops were conducted, each focusing on a different aspect of enhancing career

development. Each workshop is highlighted below.

Senior Rater Potential Evaluation (SRPE) Seminar. This workshop, developed by the Office of Personnel Management, focused on the importance of writing narratives that address potential, not performance. Senior raters use SRPEs for that purpose to identify future AAC military and civilian leaders. Sharon Senecal, a Management Training Consultant with 32 years of federal government service, and Edward Vela Jr., a retired Senior Executive Service employee with more than 15 years of federal government service, provided a number of hands-on exercises that showcased the language and process necessary in writing quality senior rater comments. For example, one of the lessons learned from these exercises is that senior raters should keep



**Then
Acting
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notes throughout the rating period on those they evaluate. Senior raters were also advised to write in the active voice, avoid generalities, make statements quantifiable, make specific recommendations for the next assignment, and be results-driven.

DAU-IDP/CL (Defense Acquisition University-Individual Development Plan/Continuous Learning) Demonstration. Randy Williams, ACMO Education and Training Specialist, and Brent Lesko, Programmer Analyst at the U.S. Army Research, Development and Acquisition Information Systems Activity (RDAISA), presented an overview on the Career Acquisition Personnel & Position Management Information System (CAPP-MIS). The CAPP-MIS Web site is an integrated suite of tools and information to help acquisition workforce members, ACMs, the ACMO, and the Army Acquisition Executive Support Agency better manage and serve the A&TWF. The Web site provides access to IDPs, CL policy, and DAU listings. More timely and efficient approval/disapproval of courses and awarding of CL points are now possible using the IDP portion of the CAPP-MIS Web site.

Position Management. Peggy Mattei, then Chief of the ACMO's Information Management Team, stated that the objectives of the posi-



PERSCOM AMB Chief COL Rob Reyenga

tion management process are to store, maintain, and accurately report acquisition position data. In support of the Director for Acquisition Career Management, the position management process also entails the validation of positions to ensure that they meet the definition of acquisition and are subsequently assigned acquisition position list (APL) numbers. Supervisors, Mattei said, play a key role in position management efforts. They ensure that employee positions are coded "acquisition" if they involve acquisition duties, keep APL command points of contact informed of position changes, and advise employees regarding help on their ACRBs.

The position management process, said Mattei, is currently undergoing an extensive review by an integrated product team (IPT), which seeks to improve the acquisition position request and validation/approval process. Preliminary recommendations emerging from the IPT point to position management as a continuous process. Significant changes could include an open request process where positions are reviewed and approved as they are submitted, thus abolishing the annual review cycle and board.

Workforce Of The Future. Steve Tkac, Army representative on the Acquisition 2005 Task Force, summarized the findings of that task force, which termed workforce downsizing and serious skills imbalances the causes of a "national security crisis." Tkac said that human resource strategic planning is the key enabler of change and the cornerstone for other initiatives. As such, employees must be viewed as assets, and recruitment and development treated as an investment rather than a cost. Some of the key proposals of the task force are to implement human resource performance plans, reinvigorate recruitment programs, develop multidisciplinary acquisition professionals, and prepare more individuals for key leadership roles.

Peggy Mattei, then Chief of the ACMO's Information Management Team



Edward Vela Jr.



Sharon Senecal



MAJ Cris Boyd, ACMO FA 51R Propensity Officer



Ken Winters, ACM, PERSCOM

The Basics of Acquisition Career Management. Mary Berg, then ACM, National Capital Region, and Ken Winters, ACM, PERSCOM, presented a briefing on what supervisors should know to help individuals achieve their career goals. ACMs play a vital role in educating supervisors about the acquisition career development plan and the career management process. Berg and Winters also outlined the documents that supervisors and ACMs help subordinates update. They concluded by summarizing the board application and review process and the supervisor's role in assisting their subordinates through it.

Luncheon Briefings

The ACE Program. Sandy Long presented a luncheon briefing on the Acquisition Career Experience (ACE) Program. This 2-year paid intern summer employment program, Long says, is an opportunity for the AAC to recruit exceptional college students with multidisciplinary backgrounds. She presented an overview of the program, including timelines, specific opportunities, program benefits, and eligibility requirements. By getting college students to work with us, Long said, the interns can learn

about Army acquisition, get involved in the kind of work we do, and hopefully be retained for the long term.

Lessons Learned Effort. A second luncheon briefing by MAJ Cris Boyd, the Functional Area (FA) 51R Propensity Officer in the ACMO, addressed the establishment of the acquisition branch at the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL). This branch will serve as a virtual information resource, allowing acquisition professionals to share knowledge by collecting, analyzing, and disseminating lessons learned, best practices, success stories, and relevant research findings. In addition, Boyd detailed an initiative for using current CALL practices to conduct a lessons learned effort for the Brigade Combat Team.

Final Session

The workshop concluded with an address by Keith Charles, Acting Director, Acquisition Education, Training, and Career Development, Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Reform. Charles is also the Acquisition 2005 Task Force Director. His presentation focused on the future acquisition workforce and the need to "grow" leaders. A number of recruiting,

compensation, retention/attrition, career development, and motivational efforts are ongoing, Charles said. These efforts, he noted, will encourage development of an acquisition workforce capable of coping with 21st century issues such as the current aging workforce. Additionally, Charles said, individuals must broaden their business knowledge, gain multifunctional expertise, learn to delegate, and take on more varied opportunities.

In closing remarks, Sandy Long termed the workshop a "great success" because its emphasis on the supervisor's role in the career development process brought to light the critical need to develop future acquisition leaders.

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